The COMMONWEAL

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Democrats' Plight

WITH the election still seven months away, commentators to a man are virtually counting President Truman out. Revolt in the South and the Wallace defection get the longer news columns, but there are also unfavorable historical precedent and the dwindling Democratic popular vote—both pointing in the same unmistakable direction. The gist of the prognosis is that without Southern or Wallaceite defections only a strong Democratic candidate could win; Mr. Truman is not a strong candidate; therefore . . .

But what are the issues on which the President has lost so many followers? His Civil Rights program is hardly a new makeshift. It was fourteen months ago—well before the Wallace candidacy—that Mr. Truman appointed his distinguished national committee of fifteen to draw up a detailed diagnosis of the second-class citizenship situation in these United States. His February 2nd message on the subject was a logical consequence of their recommendations. There was grumbling at the time, but now that the President's position has become so precarious and he has refused to back down in his espousing of the basic civil liberties for all Americans, Southern fire-eaters have been piling it on. Boss Crump of Tennessee has been the most sanctimonious about it, with politicians from Virginia, South Carolina and Mississippi also in the van. Whether they persevere in their extreme hostility to the President right through the convention or not, their present furor is sufficient to damage Democratic morale irreparably. For what is the Democrat Party without the solid South?

The other party pillar, the big city machines (except for Philadelphia), also shows signs of tottering. In the cities where Negroes are a political factor the Wallace forces will seek to counter Mr. Truman's pronounced stand on civil rights by running Negro candidates for Congress. And, of course, in unions and urban districts where the Communists are strong, Wallace will pull votes away from Truman. And what is the main question at issue in this sector? Further appeasement of Russia. This is discussed elsewhere in these pages, but here again it suffices to say that Mr. Truman has the logic on his side.

The lack of enthusiasm he inspires, his inability to carry things through—however just his sentiments—and the slightness of the current impact on the public consciousness of the policies Mr. Truman advocates are other matters. And they are important when qualifications for candidacy are in the balance. But overt opposition to Mr. Truman as standard-bearer stems primarily either from enemies of civil rights or opponents of our firmer bi-partisan foreign policy.

None of the Southern bolters can have any illusion that an anti-civil-rights regional candidate of theirs would get anywhere in a national election. Nor can Mr. Wallace in his most sanguine moments hope to do much but deliver a certain number of districts to the Republicans. Both groups are heedless of the effects of their activities on the hard-pressed Democratic Party; they appear equally oblivious of the results as far as the nation is concerned.

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THE PRESIDENT'S message to Congress on housing and rent control on February 24th asked for the extension and improvement of rent-control legislation, and the enactment of "urgently needed new housing legislation." Since the Taft-Ellender-Wagner bill was shelved now over two years ago, nothing has been done beyond the building, by private enterprise, of one and a quarter million houses in two years: this when one million a year, for at least ten years, are the minimum required, according to the President. Less than 15 percent of the houses built in 1947 was rental housing. Today over five million lived-in homes are below minimum standards: 35 percent need

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tub or shower; 52 percent need central heating. Two and a half million married couples live with other families, up 50 percent since 1940.

Perhaps the most serious warning in the President's speech is that, with three million people actually in dire need of homes, a drop in building production "would affect and injure the whole stability of our economy.

The President lists several ways of tackling the present housing crisis: three of his most important points are: 1) the reducing of costs through government-assisted research into building methods: 2) aiding the cities to rebuild, and to modernize run-down areas. Now, since three-fourths of the governors and over 90 percent of the mayors of 82 percent of all the cities in these United States state that their cities are unable to finance the construction of low-rent housing, and an even larger percentage declares they are unable to provide any subsidies other than tax exemptions, this means an ERP scheme to cope with the housing problems of a large proportion of the urban population of the U.S. 3) The President's third suggestion is that communities should be assisted to provide low-rent housing for families in the low-income groups, and is perhaps the most urgent, since wages are 15 percent above 1945 and construction costs 38 percent, and never the twain shall meet privately unless the state takes at least some introductory action. For, at present, no industry is as "middleman-ridden" as building; in the 400 different stages of building a house 30,000 different items are needed.

The Subcommittee on Slum Clearance, under Senator Wagner's chairmanship, has just completed its report to the Joint Committee on Housing, and has tabulated the replies of 82 mayors, speaking for all cities with a population of 50,000 or more. Seventy-eight of these mayors announced a total of 1,800,000 slum and substandard dwellings. And, in reply to the query whether private enterprise, now or in a foreseeable future, was in a position to provide decent housing, new or old, for low-income-group families, the No's had it, 206 to 24: and these No's included 23 governors to 3 and 70 mayors to 7.

The fundamental problem, of course, is whether, in the face of so complete a collapse of private enterprise, the state can adequately take over, in a capitalist society? England's recent experience would seem to deny that it could; housing was one of the first industries to be nationalized there, although alongside the state schemes, some private building has continued.

The report of the National Veterans' Housing Conference in Washington brought out some other indications of the public temper when four Senators and nine Congressmen urged the lobbying veterans to put all available pressure onto their representatives to get the Taft-Ellender-Wagner bill out onto the floor of the House. They were urged to refuse to be put off with substitute legislation which does not include provision for public housing. Yet, curiously, Americans spend only a third as much on housing as they do on food; some 20 percent less than they do on clothes. It would seem that nothing short of a Marshall Plan, by which cities and rural communities throughout the U.S. were state-aided only in so far as the various vested interests agreed to cooperate, would end the present complete holdup of national housing projects.

The "Inevitable" War

FOR the next two or three weeks I am going to spread a certain disquiet all over this page and then someone will stop me. I am going to worry in print about the idea that you have to accept as inevitable a war with Russia, because, in private, I do not accept that idea, and because, in private, I find that I dislike more and more the fatalistic attitude of those Americans who do.

If you think about continents, invasions across the North Pole, and "heartlands"—as the Germans thought about them—if you see America standing alone between a Communist Asia and a Communist Europe, if you think in general terms of communism and democracy, or in terms of economics, or morals, or power, or in terms of the past—how Babylon fell, or Egypt or Carthage—you can be tranquil enough; as if you stood watching the mountain slowly crumble, the rivers running to the sea. You can be as calm as if you were thinking about nothing more immediate than life or death—calmly—or about the seasons, the sunlight, the storms.

Wars come and, after they have swept over us, there is something left. If that is the way you feel—philosophically, as if you were Gibbon, or Mr. Toynbee—then you can sit in New York, and even more calmly in Des Moines, calmly accepting, calmly awaiting, calmly expecting, and then calmly preparing an "inevitable" war with Russia. For there will be someone left somewhere, after the atom bombs have dropped, and he can write the decline and fall of the West.

But if you think about details it is not so easy to avoid disquiet. Intercontinental warfare is too big to be a detail, but, within that framework, what remains of Germany becomes a detail, all of France and all of Italy become details, and the picture of these countries being made once again a battlefield comes into focus. It then is not quite so easy to press the button that will obliterate them.

The war against Germany and Japan was a big enough war, but still there was the detail Germany, the detail Japan, that had to be eliminated. In a war against Russia there is no country

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that is a detail—not even Russia—the details become various people in every country, the Communists in every country, and so a war against Russia cannot be pointed at a country, it would stagger all over the place looking for the enemy in every country, and killing enemy and friend. Doubtless, to the Russians the aims of a war would be clear; they have only America to defeat.

I am not a pacifist, I am not for a policy of capitulation, and all the talk about understanding Russia seems to me of little purpose except that it is always wise to understand whatever you can.

What I want people to understand is that if Russia goes to war then there is a war, but that until Russia goes to war there is not a war, and that until there is war there always remains a possibility of preventing a war. That possibility is reduced to a minimum if the "inevitability" of war is accepted as a fact of life.

There is something still to be done for peace and the first thing to do is to refuse to believe that the war is already on. There is a way to combine strength and the preparation of increased strength with an active desire for peace. There is a way, an impressive way, to be so strong as to discourage attack and so strongly desirous of peace as to induce other people to desire peace also. It is not entirely impossible to entertain the idea of their accepting not to die.

But none of this is possible if we are fatalists, and show it. C. G. PAULDING.

Which Battle?

THE CZECHOSLOVAKIAN news was not dramatic. The Gottwald-Stalin seizure had been shadowed too long in advance. The play had been acted before, too many times in too many settings. Although it is true that personal histories during the past weeks and months, which might, if known, place contest and drama in Bohemia, would have been underplayed in reports and hidden—suppressed—still, as the West knows it, this last fall of Czechoslovakia is unlighted by examples of strikingly noble human tragedy. Another government went out "not with a bang, but a whimper." Likewise, the Finnish story. The power contest there is no contest. The very fact that the Finns expended themselves in heroic refusal such short years ago must reduce the world's expectations now to dull, mathematical probabilities.

The probabilities, based on experience and on analysis of the forces moving men and nations—the experience repeated to nausea; the forces acting confirmed by every scrap of international news—are war within a few years, say during the next Administration. Optimism, a comic insistence that "something will turn up," a craven refusal to look at the evidence, are no longer tolerably interesting, and they grow morally intolerable.

Positive, intelligent, speedy preparation for the big war is one intellectually respectable policy for Americans. This is the policy that looks to victory in the world battle soon due to come when the limit of appeasement is passed. It is cold-eyed and cold-brained, based on experience and evidence, and not upon lies and deliberate self-delusion. It accepts war as war is fought these days, and tries to do with war the best that can be done. It would avoid stumbling into war, as if surprised: being trapped in war under the enemy's conditions, unorganized, unprepared to fulfil the objects and ends of war, unable to strike quickly and hard, wasteful of life and resources, threatened by the deepest danger of defeat.

Or else, a policy of positive capitulation. What other name would be true? Let us recognize that there is no last page in Stalin's timetable and that communism has mortal longings for all the world. Unless the United States fights with greater force and violence than Russia can, then in the world battle we accept defeat. In *that* world battle: that total, material war—atomic; biological; explosive and destructive and violent to the limit of man's inventive ingenuity; conscripting and ordering and impressing friend and enemy in one great machine, into a concentration camp of many barracks. But this other policy, of forfeiting the Third World War, declares another war and prepares another battle. Betrayal, defeatism and servility could not be offered as a respectable alternative to courageous preparation for all-out war. This positive policy would fight for loyalty and it would certainly not pretend to avoid or prevent monstrous violence against men. It is an attempt to fight what is known as communism in a different way, with different and better-aimed weapons, and with a purpose and dedication to make victory absolutely sure. The idea is to imagine Russia without the threat of American all-out national military opposition: the developed might forecast in the European and Pacific theaters and in the laboratories and factories of the last war. Then speculate what other things we could do without that superpower to rout Russia and communism and defend anything or anybody. It would still be a tragic and bloody prospect, but better, perhaps, than materially total war—and perhaps more interesting and provocative and instructive to dwell upon. We will come back to the policy of positive capitulation next week.

Of course, no future history is inevitable. Men have freedom of choice. They have it individually; and also in masses they may be taken up by the inspiration of God and of creative heroes and turn their collective path from the route marked out before them It is well to pray for that, but not to presume upon a recognizable answer. The Russian régime might break. West-

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ern Europe might take fire and weld itself together into a great power to prop up the teetering balance of the world. Any developments like those, which could put off a war indefinitely, must surely be prayed for and worked for—but does anything which anyone has suggested as a remote, practical possibility for rescuing us have a reality and probability which can free us from the obligation also to choose a plan of conduct for battle? PHILIP BURNHAM.

Payment from Japan

JAMES O. FREDERICK

THE RECENT furor in Washington, headed by Senator William F. Knowland, Republican of California, has served one very good purpose. It has brought the question of Japanese reparations into the open for a good airing. Although thus far the inquiry has not turned up anything of startling importance, it has managed to draw attention to the whole problem, and to aid in pointing out its significance.

Actually, Japanese reparations has for some time been a subject of considerable importance to the average American, even though one of which he has not been much aware. The reason is quite simple. The reparations lists have been hanging, like a sword of Damocles, over Japanese industry since the end of the war. And no Japanese industrialist, large or small, wants to take a chance. Under the present circumstances he has no way of knowing but what, after he has poured his money into refitting and reopening his plant, he will find it placed upon one of the preferred lists for reparations payments. With that kind of a situation, the only factories which can economically be put back into operation are those few definitely exempted in the original Pauley report, and the further few which although included in it, are absolutely essential to the maintenance of Japanese economy. The attendant sluggishness of Japanese industry continually provides a convenient rat-hole down which America can pour millions in an effort to set Japan on her feet. And with the increasing likelihood of the United States pressing for an early peace treaty with Japan, the question becomes even more immediate since it is something which must be settled before any treaty can logically be concluded.

Historically, the reparations picture is rather meager. The first official notice of the question, which has any bearing at the present, came in the Potsdam Declaration. It stated that Japan would be allowed to maintain such industries as would sustain her economy, but at the same time provide for the exaction of just reparations. In line with that statement, in November of 1945 President Truman called upon Edwin A. Pauley, vested him with the rank of Ambassador, and sent him to the Far East to develop a reparations program. Ambassador Pauley and his staff spent a month getting what was supposed to be a complete picture of Japanese industry and in conferring with various officials of China and the Philippines. The Ambassador then hurried back to Washington with a completed program. Basically it was sound, since it provided for the sort of sharp limiting of Japanese industrial capacity which had been the avowed American policy, and which seemed to provide the best means of destroying Japan's war potential. However, its unrealistic recommendations in some respects betrayed the hurriedness with which it had been prepared. It caused the greatest sort of consternation among the Japanese, and left many of them, along with not a few of the occupation officials, wondering just how industrial Japan was going to survive as an agricultural economy.

Fortunately for the Japanese, Ambassador Pauley's recommendations were never of much effect. It is true that the United States submitted them, virtually intact, to the reparations committee of the Far Eastern Commission. This committee was established in March, 1946, to iron out differences between the various members of the Commission. And it is also true that, after considerable discussion, the committee issued an Initial Reparations Policy statement in May, 1946. This statement again represented a policy based directly upon the Pauley report. It defined several categories of reparations materials, and stipulated just what facilities within these categories should be made immediately available to claims.

But what it did not do was to establish any basis for the division of these facilities among the members of the Far Eastern Commission—the eleven nations involved in the Pacific war. And that factor has proved to be the stumbling block ever since. Virtually all of the nations are agreed upon what should be classified as material suitable for reparations claims. And with one exception they have been able to agree upon the percentages which should be awarded to each nation. But practically from the date of the initial statement the Western powers on the one hand and Russia on the other have been stalemated over this question.

Finally, in April, 1947, in an attempt to break the deadlock in the Commission which was threatening the whole program, the State Department issued a unilateral order to General MacArthur. Under it he was ordered to make immediately available 30 percent of the initial reparations pool which had been established by the Commission. This action, because it had been taken without the consent of all the members of the Commission, drew a sharp protest from Russia,

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but the State Department refused to back down from its position. And although some of the material did get distributed, the eventual result of the order was not to break the deadlock, but rather to heighten the tension in the Far Eastern Commission and in the Allied Council for Japan between the United States and the Soviet.

In recent weeks, though, the whole picture has begun to take on what may be its final shape. The United States is now firmly committed to an anti-Soviet policy. And with that commitment the conflict over Japanese reparations has become clear-cut. It has become simply a matter of whether or not the United States is destined to have her own way in the matter.

Russia has stated definitely that she wants, and expects to get, a share of the reparations pool. Early in December she served notice on the Far Eastern Commission that a United States proposal, then pending before it, which would trim down Russia's share of reparations, was unacceptable. In making that statement Russia has bound herself to a policy which seems to be based upon a rather questionable interpretation of "reparations." Webster, in treating of the word, says that "*Reparation* is applied chiefly to compensation or recompense for wrong or injury." The Russian claim appears to be that she was wronged by Japan in a negative manner. She maintains that during the war the Japanese staffed their Kwantung Army in Manchuria with the pick of Japanese troops. The flower of the Japanese Army along the Siberian border constituted a continual threat, say the Russians, and forced them to keep large garrisons in Siberia which could otherwise have been used to advantage along the western front. Thus, Japan injured Russia indirectly by prolonging the war with Germany.

This, however, does not seem to be the only claim the Russians advance. Apparently they feel that by living up to one part of the Yalta agreement, even though it proved unnecessary, they have a claim against Japan. That is, that even though they were not needed, by the very act of entering the war at all they made themselves eligible for a cut of the reparations pie.

Thus far basic American policy has been that all members of the Far Eastern Commission should receive something in reparations. However, the United States feels that the amount should be in strict proportion to the contribution each nation made to the final defeat of Japan, and to its losses suffered due to Japanese aggression. Recently, though, the State Department has been shying away from even such a liberal policy as that. In a statement early in the year the Department said that inasmuch as all American suggestions in accordance with that policy had been rejected, the United States did not consider any of those suggestions as commitments. The statement continued that the only official policy at present of the State Department was that embodied in the April, 1947, distribution order to General MacArthur.

In that distribution Russia got nothing. Of the 30 percent of the initial pool which was distributed, China received one-half, or fifteen percent of the pool, and the Philippines, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands five percent each. The last two were for the benefit of Burma and Malaya and the Netherlands East Indies.

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At present it seems likely this "nothing for Russia" plan will continue to be United States policy for a time. It must be emphasized that, possession being nine parts of the law, the United States holds the whip hand in any agreements that are reached. And at the present time the United States certainly regards Russian claims with misgivings, for a variety of reasons. For one thing there is the simple economic side of the present containment of Soviet power. Any factories turned over to Russia as reparations would be that much of an advantage to her economy. And, conversely, anything withheld from her would be that much of a disadvantage. It is plain economic horse-sense that, if we are committed to a policy of doing our best to cripple Russia, the less we give her in the way of war-potential industry the better off we are.

Also, the United States obviously feels that others have a better claim to reparations than Russia. Russia entered the war in its last week. She suffered virtually no damage nor loss from her military activities in the Pacific. All that, compared with China's fourteen years of intermittent warfare with Japan and the ravagement that overtook the Philippines and the East Indies, not to mention our own terrible losses in men and matériel, have all combined to make State Department officials take a dim view of Russia's claims.

And, again, there is the question of what Russia has already received from the territory she occupied at the close of the war. In the Kurile Islands, for example, she took over at least one complete naval base—the same one from which the Japanese carriers steamed towards Pearl Harbor. In northern Korea large alumina deposits, processing plants, powerhouses, coal mines and similar matériel fell into her hands. And her take from Manchuria has been completely indeterminate. But it is known that from 1931 on the Japanese had been busily building Manchuria into an "arsenal of expansion," complete with the most modern facilities for steel, aluminum, magnesium, synthetic oil and other forms of production.

And, finally, the Japanese themselves have

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taken a hand in refuting one of Russia's claims. In a recent testimony before the war crimes tribunal in Tokyo, former Colonel Kenji Okoshi of the Japanese Kwantung Army stated definitely that the Japanese had not been planning an attack upon Russian Siberia. And furthermore, repatriates from the Kwantung Army have frequently made the statement that, prior to Russia's attack, their army had been stripped of virtually all its mechanized equipment. The Russian-labeled flower of the Japanese Army seems to have been a rose without thorns.

The combination of these factors makes the United States quite hesitant about placing too much weight upon any of the Russian claims for reparations. Generally, the tendency seems to be to the view that what Russia has already seized in what she terms "war booty" should be more than ample to satisfy all of her claims.

However, the United States definitely wants to settle the reparations problem. For one thing, having it hanging fire blocks any attempts at the negotiation of a peace treaty. And, equally important, the continued threat of reparations confiscation has put an effective damper upon Japanese industrial recovery. Actually, it is not possible at present to make any accurate forecasts. Ultimately the whole picture of Japanese reparations depends for its resolution upon whether or not the United States decides to risk a separate peace with Japan. If she determines to proceed on that course, without Russian support, the chances are that the reparations will be divided in the proportions already indicated. That is, with Russia receiving zero percent. If, however, she decides to wait until a mutual agreement can be reached with Russia, more wrangling in the Far Eastern Commission is probably all that will result. And, in the meantime, Japanese industry will sit tight waiting for the sword to fall—and America will continue to pay for the resultant weakness of the Japenese economy.

The Blanshard Charges

George H. Dunne

IN A SERIES of articles published in the *Nation,* Paul Blanshard undertook "to examine the social policies of [the Catholic] Church's hierarchy." The articles have been reprinted and widely read. Even Catholics who are not overly sensitive to fair criticism have found them offensive. The editors of the *Nation,* however, deny that the articles betray a spirit of narrow-mindedness or bigotry (the *Nation,* January 24, 1928). I think the editors of the *Nation* are mistaken.

The social policies of the Church are a legitimate subject of critical discussion. Fair criticism must describe the policies discussed honestly and criticize them rationally. Otherwise what we have is not criticism but a pandering to prejudice.

The techniques of bigotry are various and familiar:

1) Attribute to the adversary an offensive doctrine which in fact the adversary does not hold —Catholics teach that all Protestants go to hell.

2) Falsely attribute an offensive practice to the adversary—Catholics store guns in the basements of their churches.

3) Misrepresent a doctrine and practice of the adversary—Catholics worship Mary.

4) Attribute a real practice of the adversary to an attitude which in fact the adversary does not have—Catholic priests practice celibacy because the Catholic Church despises marriage.

5) Substitute ridicule for serious discussion of the adversary's position—sneer at the doctrine of the Real Presence, at the law of Friday abstinence, at the pomp of the liturgy.

In his articles Blanshard performs variations on all these techniques.

Honest criticism proceeds in quite a different fashion. It states the actual position of the adversary correctly and the arguments upon which the adversary bases his position fairly. It then proceeds to show wherein these arguments are fallacious and the position based upon them therefore untenable. In this Saint Thomas Aquinas, for whom Blanshard does not appear to have too much respect, is a perfect model.

Blanshard is startled to discover that Catholic moralists concern themselves with problems of "birth, death and sexual conduct," with "courtship, marriage and divorce . . . contraception, abortion, masturbation, insemination, sterilization, sodomy, and sexual relations." The really startling thing about this is that Blanshard should be startled. It seems fairly obvious that there are important moral aspects to all of these problems and that the moral aspect of any problem is a proper subject for the concern of moralists.

Blanshard has never seen, as he allows the reader to infer he has seen, an article by a Catholic theologian on the "Catholic Technique for Removing Gall Bladders." Neither has he ever

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seen an article by a Catholic theologian on the "Catholic Technique for Performing an Abortion." He will, however, find many articles by Catholic theologians on the morality of performing an abortion.

The point is that, in the Catholic view, a fetus is a human person. The technique for destroying a human person is a surgical problem—or a military problem. The moral rightness or wrongness of destroying a human person is a moral problem.

A Catholic moralist would never presume to tell a competent surgeon how best to slit a person's throat. A Catholic moralist would be acting wholly within the field of his competence in telling a surgeon that the had no moral right to slit a person's throat.

In certain nazi concentration camps highly competent medical technicians, using prisoners for guinea pigs, carried on interesting, if gruesome, experiments possibly in the interest of science. No Catholic moralist would presume to criticize their technique. Would it, however, startle Blanshard to discover a Catholic moralist questioning the moral rectitude of these experiments? If I recall correctly, we hung some of these nazi doctors. We hung them not because their technique was bad, but because their morals were bad. And I don't know that the judges who condemned them were doctors.

If Blanshard had been content to question the soundness of certain moral positions held by Catholic moralists in medical matters it would be another matter. But when he denies, as he does, the right of Catholic moralists (and by implication any moralist) to pass moral judgment upon anything a physician or surgeon chooses to do with medicine or with knives he is on very dangerous ground.

When Blanshard passes from his sweeping denial of the competence of moralists to discuss the moral aspects of medical problems, to a criticism of specific Catholic doctrines, he immediately resorts to the techniques of bigotry.

In his discussion of what he calls the dogma of the equality of mother and fetus he angrily denounces a Catholic moral doctrine without any rational discussion of the arguments upon which the doctrine is based.

First it is necessary to make clear that the Catholic moral position is not, as it is often misrepresented to be, that whenever a physician must choose between saving the mother's life or saving the child's life he must sacrifice the mother and save the child. The Catholic position is simply this: he may not kill the child in order to save the mother.

The arguments upon which the Catholic position is based are these:

1) The fetus, from the moment of conception, is a human person. The life that begins in the womb at that moment is a human life. Birth changes the mode of its existence; it does not change the kind of being it is. Before birth it is a human person living within its mother's womb. After birth it is the same human person living outside its mother's womb.

2) Homicide is never permissible except as the only available means of defending one's own life (or that of another) against an unjust aggressor.

A fair criticism of the Catholic position would have to proceed along either of two lines: it would have to prove that the fetus is not a human person; or it would have to defend the proposition that homicide is justified as a means of defending my own life even though the victim is not an unjust aggressor.

The Catholic moralist does not believe that a mother adrift in a lifeboat with her child but without sufficient food and water to sustain both would be morally justified in killing her child and tossing the body overboard. If the fetus is a human person then it is impossible to distinguish morally between this act and abortion.

If the fetus is not a human person, when does it become one? Is it a human person one minute after birth, but not a human person one minute before birth? Does passing through a door change the nature of a being? Is it a shocking murder deliberately to crush the skull of an infant ten minutes after its birth, but a morally praiseworthy act deliberately to crush its skull five minutes before birth?

Perhaps Blanshard is satisfied that he has answers to these and similar questions. In fact he does not answer them. He does not mention them, because he does not even discuss the reasons for the Catholic position. At least he should have recognized that such reasons exist, that they involve serious questions, and that the Catholic position, therefore, is not simply an irrational whimsy.

It is no refutation of the Catholic position to say that a lot of young Catholic matrons don't like it. Or is Blanshard prepared to say that the Catholic moral doctrine of racial equality is unsound because a lot of Catholics don't like it and don't practice it?

It is no refutation to say that many Catholic physicians rationalize their way around the Catholic position by pretending to find "an acute diseased condition" present when such is not in fact the case. Or is Blanshard prepared to say that the Catholic moral doctrine of the just wage is bad moral doctrine because many Catholic employers rationalize their way around it by pretending to find excusing causes when in fact such causes are not present?

Certainly it is no refutation to say that the vast majority of American doctors consider thera-

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peutic abortion under certain circumstances to be a moral obligation. Or is Blanshard prepared to say that the extermination of Jews would have become a morally defensible act provided only that the vast majority of doctors in nazi Germany approved of it?

In discussing what he calls "the doctrine of the sacred head" Blanshard falsely attributes to Catholics a belief which Catholics do not hold. His method, as old as the history of bigotry, may be thus paraphrased:

> Catholic manuals of instruction for nurses, in treating of craniotomy and baptism, are filled with references to the head of the fetus. This is because Catholics regard "the head of the fetus as the probable seat of the soul." Now who ever heard of anything more ridiculous than this?

It is not Catholic doctrine that the head is the probable seat of the soul. Catholic doctrine explicitly denies that the head or any part of the body is the seat of the soul. The soul is not "seated" in the body or in any part of the body. On the contrary, body and soul are joined in a substantial union *per se* which is unique of its kind and which is the Ego.

If Blanshard were writing an honest criticism he would have put the case somewhat as follows:

> Catholic manuals of instructions for nurses, in treating of craniotomy and baptism, have a great many references to the head of the fetus. In the case of craniotomy, this is because the common method of killing a fetus in cases of difficult parturition is to crush its skull. Catholics hold that this is murder; hence the instructions about being careful of the head of the fetus. In the case of baptism, Catholics hold that, while it is probably sufficient for the validity of the sacrament that water touch any part of the body, the traditionally more approved method is, wherever possible, to pour water upon the head of the recipient. Hence the frequent references to the head of the fetus.

Blanshard might then have attempted to prove that craniotomy was not murder and that the Catholic doctrine about supernatural grace, the sacramental order, the nature and importance of baptism cannot be justified.

This would have been a fair discussion. This is not what Blanshard does. Instead he ridicules a Catholic practice by attributing it to a doctrine which he thinks patently absurd (though many respected minds, including that of Descartes, have not thought it absurd) and which he erroneously says is Catholic doctrine. This is pandering to bigotry.

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In his discussion of what he calls "the doctrine of protection against heresy" Blanshard is no less unfair. Here there are two things involved, one a matter of doctrine, the other a matter of practice.

The point of doctrine is this: Catholics believe that Christ, Who was God-Man, established one Church and one sacramental order and one priesthood. They believe that non-Catholic religions lack divine sanction and that the ministers of such religions do not have valid credentials. They must logically believe, therefore, that they cannot summon such a minister to the bedside of a patient with the express purpose in their minds of having him administer sacramentally to the patient. To do so would be, from their point of view, formally to cooperate in what they believe to be a false religion. In an analogous way, a physician who believes sincerely that osteopathy has no therapeutic value would be unlikely to summon a osteopath with the express purpose in mind of having him cure a patient of a bleeding ulcer.

However, a Catholic nurse can and will summon to the patient's bedside a non-Catholic minister in the same way that she would summon a friend or relative. The minister may come for the specific purpose of ministering to the patient, but the nurse in calling him does not have this in mind as *her* specific purpose. She calls him as an act of charity and courtesy, recognizing that neither the patient nor the minister shares her beliefs. Her cooperation with what, in the logic of her beliefs, she regards as a false religious practice is not formal but material and is therefore permissible as an act of charity.

In similar fashion an orthodox Jew could hardly summon a Catholic priest for the express purpose of having the priest absolve a patient's sins. The orthodox Jew sincerely believes that the priest cannot absolve sins. But the orthodox Jew would undoubtedly summon the priest for a Catholic patient as an act of charity while mentally disassociating himself from the sacramental business that takes place at the bedside.

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The Catholic doctrine about being the only divinely sanctioned religion in the new dispensation may not be acceptable to non-Catholics and is an old subject of debate. But it is not of itself calculated to inflame bitter anti-Catholic prejudices. But to suggest to non-Catholics that in fact it is the practice in Catholic hospitals to refuse to call non-Catholic ministers to the bedside of non-Catholic patients is certainly calculated to do so. A Catholic is not likely to be emotionally prejudiced against Jews because a Jew does not believe that a priest can absolve; but he is very apt to be bitterly aroused if he should be told that in Jewish hospitals Catholic patients plead in vain for a priest to be sent to them.

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Blanshard's technique in his discussion of the "sexual code of the Roman Church" is a sneer. One can only infer from his introductory paragraphs to the subject that he does not believe that problems relating to sexual conduct have anything to do with morals. Otherwise why should it astonish and anger him to discover that Catholic moralists pass judgment upon the rightness or wrongness of such things as rape, fornication, adultery, sodomy, masturbation, and contraception?

Contrary to what Blanshard implies, the Church does not regard the sex instinct or the pleasure of sex as evil. She regards both as the handiwork of God, intended to play important rôles in the divine economy of creation.

Similarly the Church regards food and the pleasure incidental to it as good. Just as sex and sexual pleasures are essential to the creation of life, food and the pleasures it affords are essential to the maintenance of life.

On the other hand, the Church regards gluttony as evil, because gluttonous indulgence in the pleasures of eating violently divorces those pleasures from any relationship to their natural function in the economy of life. Instead of means they become ends. Perhaps Blanshard would agree about the immorality of the old Roman practice of gorging oneself at the banquet table with interludes for the purpose of emptying one's stomach by means of artificially induced vomiting. The immorality consisted only in this: that this was not an ordered indulgence in the pleasure of eating, but disordered, and therefore immoral, because it completely divorced the good pleasure of eating from its ordered function in the economy of life.

The same is true of sex and the joys of sex. Whatever the individual's attitude towards sex may be, it seems rather plain that in the order of nature the entire apparatus of sex is intended to serve within the married state the high end of the propagation of life. This is the order within which the enjoyment of sex is natural and good. An indulgence in sex which divorces it from its end in nature and by artificial means makes it impossible for it to function within this order is disordered and therefore immoral.

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The Catholic moral position, not only as it relates to sex but as it relates to all problems of human behavior, is at bottom determined by two controlling philosophical convictions. These are:

1) This is a teleological universe.

2) The end of a thing, as Aristotle realized, is its nature.

Judgment upon the moral rightness or wrongness of human acts is determined by reference to these two principles. The positing of a human act in such a way as deliberately to frustrate the realization of its end is a frustration of its nature. It is in this sense that it is said to be "against nature" and therefore immoral.

Blanshard may not agree with this view. At least he should recognize that it is a serious view. It does not deserve simply to be dismissed with the insulting suggestion that the Catholic position on moral problems relating to sexual conduct, on birth control for example, is based on nothing more than the antisexual prejudices of "an old man who had never been married and had never studied medicine."

A few points of detail which merit brief comment:

a) To say that the distinction between periodic abstinence from sexual intercourse and indulgence in sexual intercourse using contraceptives is merely a "specious distinction" is analogous to saying that there is only a specious distinction between Gandhi's fasts and Roman gluttony.

b) If it is true, as Blanshard alleges, that the clergy of Massachusetts in opposing the birth control bill of 1942 carried on "one of the most fantastic campaigns of misrepresentation in the history of American politics," then, of course, the clergy was wrong and should be taken to task. Misrepresentation is immoral (because it divorces language from its end which is the communication of truth and is therefore against nature). It is as immoral for Catholics to misrepresent the position of their adversaries as it is for Blanshard to do so.

If, on the other hand, what Blanshard objects to is the effort of the clergy to persuade people to oppose the bill then, of course, he is wrong. As the editors of the *Nation* remark editorially: "In matters affecting the general welfare—and we include birth control legislation and many other problems as well as state aid to schools—Catholics most assuredly have the right of all Americans to press for the acceptance of their views." (the *Nation*, January 24, 1948.)

c) In the matter of combatting venereal disease through the dissemination of information the policy of the Church is admittedly one of reserve. She is not opposed to constructive efforts, but she is opposed to indiscriminate methods which ignore the fact that sexual conduct has something to do with morals. Indiscriminate dissemination of information about how to avoid venereal disease unaccompanied by commensurate efforts to strengthen moral defenses of the individual might be a boon to brothels but disastrous to morals.

I should agree that sometimes this reserve is carried in fact to the point of excessive suspicion even of methods of education that are sound. There are two problems involved: one medical, the other moral. Neither can be ignored. There are methods of disseminating information about

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venereal disease which leave intact the moral defenses against sexual license. Catholics should be as anxious to encourage such methods as they are zealous to resist other methods which tend to disseminate not only information, but also the notion that the only thing wrong about sexual license is contracting disease: as though the only thing wrong about bank robbery were getting caught.

Although I do not often find myself agreeing with the Catholic War Veterans, I am inclined to the view that the distribution by the army of match-books containing information on the control of venereal disease is not one of the well advised methods. I should not object to match-books advertising the therapeutic value of Alka-seltzer; but fornication should not be put on the same level as indigestion. That, at least, is the Catholic view of the matter.

I think Blanshard would be right in wanting his own son and daughter to have a proper understanding of venereal disease. I should not imagine, however, that he would profoundly desire to have them get their information from match-books or wrapped up in five-cent candy bars or out of a juke box.

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What of Catholic schools? I agree with Blanshard that non-Catholics have a right to ask these questions: "Are the Roman Catholic schools worthy of national support? Are they democratic? Do they teach responsible freedom? Do they teach tolerance and national solidarity?"

Blanshard has not shown that in any of these respects Catholic schools compare unfavorably with non-Catholic schools in this country. Some of the points he makes are relevant, others are irrelevant, others are dishonest.

It is true that the Catholic school system is not organized democratically. Its superintendents are not elected nor appointed by elected officials. It cannot be denied that there are disadvantages to this. This imposes upon Catholic authorities an obligation to be particularly careful to appoint only competent, trained and progressive educational administrators. The administrators themselves must be particularly careful to maintain an attitude of humility and of open-mindedness towards people, ideas and methods, and a constant awareness of the responsibility of Catholic schools to the community.

It would be untrue to pretend that these conditions have been ideally achieved. It would be equally untrue to deny that considerable progress has been made in recent years in the direction of meeting these conditions. It is also untrue to assume that the democratic control of public schools functions as ideally as Blanshard seems to imply. Chicago is only one city that can supply ample documentation on this head. Things are neither all black nor all white in any system.

If Catholic schools are free from direct popular control, they are subject to a form of indirect control which is not entirely impotent. Catholic parents are not easily persuaded of their obligation to send their children to Catholic schools unless they are satisfied that their children can get as good an education in Catholic as in public schools. Catholic educators are generally aware of this. As a matter of fact, the competitive pressure has so strongly asserted itself that the criticism has often been made that Catholic schools, especially on the university level, have sacrificed the best of their own educational philosophy to an excessively slavish imitation of the worst features of secular education. In too many Catholic universities the academic atmosphere is more congenial to an instructor in money and banking than to a professor of Aristotelean or Thomistic political philosophy.

On the parochial school level it must be conceded that ideal objectives are unlikely to be realized if the educational policies and methods are controlled by a parish priest who has never taught a day in his life and probably has never read an educational journal. However, while technically the pastor is responsible for the school, actually in most cases control is pretty firmly in the hands of religious teachers who have made education their life work. It is a rash and inexperienced pastor who thinks that he can impose his will upon a Mother Superior.

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Undoubtedly there are weaknesses in Catholic schools. There has been too common a tendency to assume that teaching methods and disciplinary techniques which were good enough for our grandmothers are good enough for us. This is a stagnant attitude which ignores the possibility of progress and the necessity of aiming at greater perfection.

This tendency, however, is breaking down. There are Catholic schools which are models of sound progressive education. There is Father George Ford's Corpus Christi parochial school in New York City, an educational show piece visited yearly by literally hundreds of public school teachers. There is St. Thomas the Apostle school in Chicago which, like Corpus Christi, has successfully synthesized the best in traditional methods with the best in modern methods.

Such schools are still far from being the rule, but they indicate the emergence of a new outlook. Is the model school in the public school system yet the rule or still the exception?

Most of the relevant criticism which can be made of Catholic schools can also be made of public schools. Their faults are reflections of the

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general pattern according to which progress is always achieved in a constant struggle against human inertia.

If Blanshard is able to document with examples his charge that Catholic schools are not democratic, I could document with examples a charge that public schools are not democratic. Are the Jim Crow schools of the South democratic? Are those public schools in Los Angeles County which still segregate Mexican children democratic? Only the other day I was reading a report of the Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools detailing the progress that has been made in eliminating the segregated school. It was encouraging to see that progress was being made, but sobering to be reminded how far short of the democratic ideal thousands of public schools fall.

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On the other hand, I challenge Blanshard or anyone else to find a public school in this country where the principles and practice of democracy, of responsible freedom, and not of "tolerance" but of positive understanding and love for the members of all religious and racial groups, are more conscientously inculcated than in Monsignor M. C. Keating's St. Robert Bellarmine school at Burbank, California.

The point made by Blanshard that teaching nuns (and the same is true of teaching orders of men) receive no personal salary for their work is irrelevant. Blanshard is suggesting that the teaching efficiency and ability of the nuns is lowered because they are not paid.

"From each according to his ability, to each according to his need," is the rule of life in religious orders. The editors of the *Nation* are not Marxists, but they are, unless I have been mistaken, sympathetic to the socialist point of view and little inclined to concede the capitalist claim that only the profit motive can supply incentive. It is somewhat surprising to find them apparently endorsing Blanshard's suggestion that because nuns are not interested in personal profit they cannot be good teachers.

The inadequate wage level of lay teachers is another matter. It cannot be denied that here Catholic schools in general have been seriously at fault. This has been due partly to the insufficiency of financial resources, but partly also because of a tendency on the part of religious administrators who, thanks to the blessings of the communal life which they enjoy, do not have to forage for themselves (much less for a dependent family) to remain insensitive to the iron imperatives of economic life. It makes a mockery of religion when religious schools pay their teachers salaries within the limits of which it is impossible for them, short of a heroic life of chastity to which they have not been called, to fulfil the obligations of Catholic married life of which they are constantly reminded from the pulpit and in the confessional. Fortunately there is a growing awareness of this serious fault and an increasing effort to eliminate it.

Blanshard's criticism of the lack of academic freedom in Catholic schools does not make too much sense. What does he mean by academic freedom? Certainly a Catholic school will not retain on its staff a teacher who contradicts genuinely Catholic doctrines. I seriously question whether a group of liberals of Blanshard's persuasion, if they were to establish a school to teach liberal social doctrines because they were convinced these doctrines were true, would long keep on their staff a professor who taught that these doctrines were false. I wonder how long Mr. Robert Taft, whether he were silent or talked, would last on the faculty of the New School for Social Research.

Every school places limits upon academic freedom in terms of the set of principles in which it believes. This includes the public schools. A public school teacher who was found teaching her class that Jesus Christ Who was God established a unique Church which is the Holy, Roman, Catholic and Apostolic Church would be summoned to the superintendent's office in short order. She would be told that there was a definite limit to her academic freedom. I rather suspect Blanshard would approve.

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Blanshard is unfair in listing twelve propositions which he describes as "doctrines of the hierarchy which no teacher in the Catholic school system is free to challenge publicly without incurring penalties." He indiscriminately brackets together as matters of doctrine propositions some of which are genuine articles of Catholic faith, others of which are matters of pious belief not binding upon Catholics, others of which are mere matters of opinion or historical interpretation, and one of which is as much a doctrine of international law as it is of the hierarchy.

The doctrine of the infallibility of the Pope in matters of faith and morals is an essential part of Catholic dogmatic belief. The genuinity of the apparitions at Fatima is not.

Blanshard would be justified in saying that too many Catholics in this country tended to make support of Franco a test of one's Catholic faith which it certainly is not, and that this was a grievous scandal. He would also probably be correct in surmising that in too many Catholic schools in this country a teacher who openly condemned Franco would run the risk of losing his job and that this was a scandal. But he is wrong in saying that "no teacher in the Catholic school system" could challenge the pro-Franco position

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without incurring penalties and thus leading his readers to believe that this matter of opinion is a Catholic doctrine on the same level as belief in the Real Presence.

I am one proof that he is wrong. I have consistently deplored Franco and his revolution and his political philosophy and especially the identification of the Church with his cause. I have expressed my views repeatedly and publicly in the two Catholic universities where I have taught. I incurred the displeasure of a minority of my students, one of whom once publicly charged me with taking my opinions from the *Nation* and *New Republic* (which high crime I justly though not indignantly denied). But I never incurred any penalty for freely expressing my views.

The truth is that there is neither as little academic freedom in Catholic schools as Blanshard supposes nor as much as I should desire. When all is said and done, however, I have yet to hear of a Catholic university that fired a professor because he taught in his science classes that oleomargarine was as nutritive as butter and thereby offended the dairy interests. I do know of a state university where this happened. Nor have I heard of a Catholic university warning one of its professors that he must cease to belittle the vitamin content of oranges because the large citrus interests were displeased. I have heard of a large non-Catholic university where this happened. (These are pleasant little items that might be filed away for reference the next time Galilo is brought up.)

If Blanshard believes that the principle of academic freedom requires that Catholic schools must hire professors who contradict the essential tenets of Catholic faith I think he is asking too much. When the *Nation* feels compelled by the principle of freedom of opinion to add the editor of the *Brooklyn Tablet* to its editorial staff I shall be ready to discuss the subject further.

Judith

Now lies Holofernes dead
On this alien land, unwept.
All his valiant soldiers fled
Like dry leaves by strong winds swept.

Now my people thank our God
For deliverance from woe.
A weak woman was His rod
To chastise a mighty foe.

What of me the feeling rod
On so cruel a mission sent?
Peace has left my soul, Oh God
Pity me Thy instrument.

MARY AIKEN.

Communications

STORM WARNINGS

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: It seems to me that Father Higgins's review of the *Economic Reports of the President* ("Storm Warnings," THE COMMONWEAL, February 27) calls for some critical comment. However, it's hard to come to grips with because so much of it consists of blithe assumptions and somewhat cryptic innuendoes. I take it that Father Higgins thinks that most of us are confused, and that the most confused of all are those who are willing to carry the responsibility of producing and distributing and keeping the economy moving. One of Father Higgins's touchstones seems to be that those who lament the New Deal hold their heads above the confusion, while confusion reigns among those who concentrate on operating an economy which somehow happens to have yielded a lot more material comforts to more people with more freedom than ever before in the world's history. I do not propose to get into a debate, but I would like to ask Father Higgins to set us straight on a few questions raised by his treatment of the *Economic Reports of the President.*

There seemed to be disapproval in the suggestions that Americans are "either oblivious altogether of the facts of economic life, or, at best, hoping against hope that the United States, alone of all the important nations in the world, can somehow hang on desperately to a tradition of economic individualism which is at least as dead as Hitler is." Does that mean that Father Higgins is rooting for us to plunge into the socialism and collectivism which prevail in Europe? Why aren't the European people, having finished off economic individualism, producing and serving each other more successfully? Is Father Higgins sure that the breakdown of trade between the farm and the city in the European nations, that the rampant black markets, that the necessity, with protest, to be sure, of resorting to steadily increasing government coercion of citizens, that the whole process of offering government benefits without work and soaking those who do work to pay for the benefits, will not increasingly weaken the will to effort so that there are less and less real goods to redeem more and more paper promises; that the worthlessness of the paper or inflation will be the inevitable outcome—that all of this is not largely the failure of the managed economy? Does Father Higgins think there is any evidence which points that way? Is the liberal London *Economist* entirely wrong when it draws conclusions of this character week after week?

Can we be sure that, centrally directed, not to say coerced, effort is more fruitful than voluntarily given effort in the building of the production which it will take to get that 28 percent of the population over the $2,000 income level. Incidentally, could Father Higgins tell us the progress that has been made in that direction over the years in the American economy? How far would it take us in that direction if we confiscated all incomes over $10,000? If we did, what might follow in the acceptance

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of responsibility to organize and produce, and in finding the savings it takes to prepare the ground and build the tools for the production of goods?

In this connection, one of the choice bits from the President's Economic Reports is the following: ". . . the accumulations of capital over the years have in fact involved deprivations of the rank and file worker."

How would Father Higgins square this bit of economic thinking with the fact that as capital investment per worker increased from $2,000 in 1879 to $4,000 in 1946, the real wages of unskilled factory workers rose from 27 cents an hour to $1.11 an hour?

Is it economic individualism when a man or an institution takes responsibility for the savings of other men, makes a deal with still other men to permit him to organize them into a productive team on terms bargained out with them individually or collectively and when this productive team proceeds to prosper or fail in accord with the extent to which it serves or satisfies still other men—all this going on under rules and regulations laid down by the elected representatives of the community? Or are economic individualism and *laissez faire* straw men in this day and age?

It is true that workers lost ground steadily in terms of real income during the last half of 1947, but despite our too high prices, are not workers receiving higher real income than in the good peacetime year of 1941? How would Father Higgins establish that since 1941 wage rates have not been pushed up to a level which just cannot be redeemed at 100 cents on the dollar by the output of which the American economy is capable today? Perhaps Father Higgins is expecting a too rapid increase in the real wages of the average worker. I wonder what he deduces from the inability of the Labor governments in England and elsewhere in Europe to deliver on their assurances that once profits were eliminated and prices placed under control, there would be higher living standards for the worker.

Father Higgins seems to hold to the view that prices have risen primarily because "business generally reacted to increases in costs by increasing prices rather than by absorbing them in whole or in part by reducing profits." What are the facts—are profit margins up or down? If they are down, as Father Higgins will find out if he investigates, has not business absorbed higher costs in part out of profits? Does Father Higgins go along with Lord Keynes in what he told us in "Econmoic Consequences of the Peace"—that high profits are the result and not the cause of high prices? I suggest that it would be instructive for Father Higgins to work through the calculation of the risk and judgments which a fellow who wants to keep his business afloat makes when he sets his prices. Then I would like him to explain how the business man goes about setting his prices so that if he should happen to have high volume his profit would be nice and low. Then, if he were able to work out that calculation, but made a little mistake, or if a competitor took away 5 percent of his business, where would he and his employees be?

Quoting the judgment of the report that profits on the whole were too high, Father Higgins tosses in a little "And how!" That seems to suggest a judgment independent of the President's Council of Economic Advisers. I wonder by what kind of analysis Father Higgins has arrived at the certainty that profits are more than enough to provide for inadequate depreciation allowances, artificial inventory profits, the higher cost of doing business, and the need to maintain dividends if the capital required for stability and expansion is to be obtained. Why is it that the great majority of businesses are strained for working capital and unable to raise new capital from investors?

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Perhaps the thing that floored me most was Father Higgins's statement that "the President and his Council of Economic Advisers have made a great contribution by forcing us . . . to concentrate on the *causes* of inflation instead of its *symptoms*. The big problem is a lack of balance between wages, prices and profits." Do today's higher prices have anything to do with the fact that the government doubled the money supply during the New Deal years and then proceeded to triple it since the war? Do they have anything to do with the fact that we are paying 30 cents out of every dollar of income to be governed and regulated and defended? When the New Dealers told us that the public debt did not matter, were they right when they said that we only owed it to ourselves? And are we now paying for it in butter at a dollar a pound?

I have before me *Labor's Monthly Survey,* issued by the American Federation of Labor, for January, 1948. I quote from it: "The root cause for today's continuing price rise is the inflation of money. . . . We must attack the root cause of inflation, the excess money supply." Could it be that the *Economic Reports of the President* are, after all, a political document and that it was deemed expedient to avoid mention of those causes of inflation for which government is responsible: money supply, government spending, taxes?

Is it inflation or deflation which besets us now? I am reminded of the Senator in "The Senator Was Indiscreet," who is against inflation and against deflation—but who is all out for "flation." How does Father Higgins square concern about wages which are too low with President Truman's explanation over the radio last fall that prices are high and rising because of the high purchasing power of the American people? He gave "the great god production" and the NAM a pretty vigorous brush-off, but does he remember what happened in 1937 when the New Deal created purchasing power faster than production could be raised?

Mr. Leon Keyserling is the only one of the three members of the President's Council of Economic Advisers who is on record on postwar inflation or deflation. He predicted large unemployment after the war, and called for vast public works and government spending. Where would we be today if he had his present responsibility and Congress followed his advice?

Great stress is laid on a lack of balance among prices,

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wages and profits. "Lack of balance among prices, wages and profits" is the "cause of inflation." Also, "the continuance of maximum employment will be impossible unless we achieve the necessary purchasing power adjustments in the price-wage-profit structure." Yet the President himself has said that high purchasing power is the cause of inflation. Would not, then, more purchasing power give us more inflation? In trying to understand this, it would seem necessary to draw one of two conclusions, either (a) Father Higgins is confused and is trying to run with the ball in two directions at the same time, or (b) Father Higgins expects to find a Mind which will tell each of us how much wages, how much prices, how much profit we are to get so as to maintain the ideal balance in perpetuity. After Father Higgins finds the Mind, it will then be necessary to find the Force necessary to insure that 140 million Americans accept the wisdom of that Mind. That is why I would like Father Higgins to distinguish the program for labor, business, agriculture and government to "combine their resources effectively" from Mussolini's corporate state. Would it not mean a cartelism and a trustification uncomfortably close to the "undemocratic centralism of the jittery boys on 14th Street"? Would it not mean permanent wage control and price control and profit control?

Are there not other relationships which are as important as the wage-price-profit ratio—for example, the balance between savings and investment, and between consumption and capital expenditure? Could it be that one of the forces behind inflation, which is an excess of money over goods, is the fact that we have come out of the years of depression and New Deal and war with a badly depleted physical plant? From 1930 right on through 1946 American corporations paid out almost $5 billion more than they earned during those seventeen years, and during that seventeen-year period the share of the national income which was paid out in dividends was reduced from 7.7 percent to 3.2 percent. During the same period, for the first time in the history of this country, we have not only failed to equip each worker with more tool power, but have lost ground. Could it be that we are giving out too much in claims on consumption, primarily wages, and not enough to expand production, primarily profits and dividends? If that were the case, would not Father Higgins's aspiration to expand consumption, which we all share, be smashed against the fact that you cannot consume what you do not produce? Is that not disturbingly like what has happened in Europe?

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We can agree that inadequate consumption can bring on a depression. But it is history that most depressions started with a slump in capital goods. Don't we have more buying power than production today, and is that not why we have inflation? If we continue to increase buying power at the expense of money for investment, and those forms of income which attract investment, are we not likely to have our depression start with a capital-goods slump, to say nothing of having our inflation aggravated? Is it not a fact that the companies which give employment are not suffering from a dearth of purchasing power today, but are suffering from difficulty in financing expanded dollar volume and inability to raise money on the capital markets?

It seems to me that Father Higgins and the economists who advise the President are suffering from a rather serious cultural lag. We were told during the '30's that the great cause of unemployment was that savings accumulated faster than investment opportunities were created, with the result that large sums of money were taken out of circulation. The theory was that savings came out of high incomes and that when these were whittled down there might be a proper balance between investment and savings. Have those who advanced that theory in the 1930's ever reappraised it in the light of today's realities? If they did, they would find that savings are accumulating in banks and insurance companies; that the great bulk of savings comes out of the lower and middle-income groups; that this is largely dead money, and money which normally functions as equity investment and makes possible the investment of institutional assets is now being clipped off into the Federal Treasury. All this involves great danger to economic stability and continued employment and to maintaining, let alone increasing, living standards. I would like to hear Father Higgins's views on maintaining the proper balance between investment and consumption, and between savings and their investment.

I wonder how far Father Higgins wants us to go in correcting this distribution of income? The share of national income which went to labor payments increased from 81 percent in 1939 to 88 percent in 1946. The share of corporate dividends was reduced from 7.2 percent to 3.2 percent. How far will the 9.6 percent of all income after taxes which went to individuals earning more than $5,000 go in taking care of individuals earning less than $5,000, who already have the remaining 90.2 percent of all income? If you gave them all of it, and thereby disturbed established working incentive and relationships to the extent of canceling the normal increase of productivity for only one year, they would lose out. If you clipped off all income over $5,000, distributed it and as a result national income dropped even a couple of percentage points, everybody would be worse off. It is on that fine a margain that Father Higgins and the government economists are working when they try to solve our economic problem by taking from the rich and giving to the poor. If, instead of merely sneering at the NAM, all the income of those earning $25,000 and over were distributed to everybody else, it would redistribute 1.3 percent of the individual's net income and a drop in production of 1/1000 would leave each individual worse off.

Farm prices have increased much more than the prices charged by members of the NAM, who are paying industrial workers double prewar wage rates. Of the 28 percent of American families earning less than $2,000 a year, are not a very large proportion of them farm families, and have not many other farm families moved above the $2,000 income level in the last few years? Is not the

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principal factor in the higher cost of living during 1947 the price of agricultural products? Is not the greater income now being received by farmers a step in the correction of maldistribution of income? Is it not that step which is the major reason that workers have lost ground steadily in terms of real income during the last half of 1947? Father Higgins is in favor of higher farm incomes, but against higher food prices. I wish he'd tell us how to do it.

The United States has assumed a great responsibility for leadership in the world. This responsibility is about to take the tangible form of sharing a considerable percentage of our food stuff with the nations of Western Europe. Will not this require less consumption at home? Does it not, then, follow that the CIO should decide not to seek additional wages now because additional wages would only bid up the price of the food which is left after foreign commitments are met? Is it not the responsible position to recognize that the great commitment we have accepted in the world will mean lower consumption here than would otherwise be the case, and that meeting that commitment abroad, maintaining consumption here, and maintaining the stability of the economy and of the dollar requires a wage-price-profit relationship here which will place minimum strain on a curtailed supply and which at the same time will restore and expand the productive capacity necessary to meet commitments abroad and to raise living standards here? Would not that require adjusting the wage-price-profit ratio in a direction opposite to that which Father Higgins advocates?

This has been a long letter. I hope that Father Higgins will find it possible to answer the questions put here without mentioning NAM, reactionary, *laissez faire* and the nineteenth century. I can assure him that these are the problems of the twentieth century and that I am as concerned as he with making this fertile and free society function successfully to meet its obligations to all its members and to offer example and genuine help to the nations of the world which are struggling with external aggression and internal decay. My purpose in putting these questions is to satisfy myself and your readers that Father Higgins has satisfactorily thought through the implications of what he advocates and that he understands what gives this society its freedom and fertility.

WILLIAM J. CASEY
Chairman, Board of Editors,
The Research Institute of America, Inc.

The Stage & Screen

Where Stars Walk

THE DUBLIN Gate Theatre seems to have hit a firmer stride with their third offering, a play written by one of their actor-founders, Micheal MacLiammoir. The business is eclectic to say the least. It gives us a Shavian Englishman, a pair of Yeatsian lovers, and

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a good deal of chit-chat right out of Noel Coward. One might say it aims to please. I suppose the point of the piece will be that even if you don't believe in magic, it still goes on right under your nose. A sophisticated actress and a number of her sophisticated friends are engaged in putting on an heroic Irish play in present-day Dublin. They spend a good part of the evening arguing about the possibilities and *size* of the kings and queens they are supposed to be portraying—with appropriate skepticism—while all the while, a reincarnation of two of the most glamorous personages under discussion are engaged in the actress establishment as houseboy and tweeney. The audience is, of course, in on the secret; and in the end, is privileged to hear of the flight of the pair of lovers as a pair of black swans. It is my contention that Mr. MacLiammoir might have spared us this last bit of over-conscious symbolism, although I liked his play very much and enjoyed the performance. He, himself, is interesting in the part of the Boy and young Helena Hughes is enchanting as the enchanted Slavey. Meriel Moore again is fine. (*at the Mansfield*).

Tonight At 8:30

I WISH Noel Coward might have been content with one bill, rather than two, in this revival of his short vaudevilles. I think there are three good sections: "Family Album," "Red Peppers," and "Hands Aross The Sea." And one might add "Ways And Means." The rest contribute very little either to his reputation, or valiant Gertrude Lawrence's. "Fumed Oak" was always a bore, and something called "Shadow Play" is by all odds the most embarrassing display I have ever witnessed. In the first place, you can't understand it; and when you think you are beginning to, you don't want to. I'm sorry for the grammar, and even sorrier that this kind of short note will seem to detract from Miss Lawrence's performance. She is, quite simply, beautiful; and if you can catch her in the bill with "Red Peppers" in it, I'm sure everyone (even out-of-town Aunts), will be pleased. (*at the National*).

Me and Molly

GERTRUDE BERG'S famed dissection of the Jewish portions of the Bronx adds up to a very slow play, but a very pleasant one. It is nothing more nor less than tailored Radio; filled with the same sort of infinitesimal daily detail and local noise. Nevertheless, it does present an honest conception of family life, and Mrs. Berg makes, as she has done these many years, a wonderful mother. More than this, in this instance, she has got one wonderful child. In the part of "Rosie," Joan Lazer ought to be making present history on the street. She is an intelligent, un-mugging skilful actress of some ten years of age. Let her elders take note. (*At the Belasco*).

KAPPO PHELAN

Bagdad on the Subway

NEW YORK CITY provides the locale of the three movies reviewed this week. In fact, one of them, *"The Naked City," is* New York, and the camera wanders continuously up and down Manhattan and even strays to the outlying boroughs. This Mark Hellinger production is no ordinary movie; the city itself and its people (and I mean real people, not actors) are as important to the plot as the fine cast which portrays the New Yorkers enmeshed in this melodramatic story. Barry Fitzgerald, as the police lieutenant assigned to this particular murder case, is probably the only familiar figure in the picture, but he and the many actors surrounding him turn in good performances that add greatly to the film's realism. Of course it is mainly the photography of New York that makes this picture so real, but at the same time the story and actors provide the excuse for the camera's excursion into main streets and side streets, over bridges and through the city's heterogeneous neighborhoods. Jules Dassin has directed the whole very well, and as the scene shifts from interiors and close-ups to the New York exteriors, the plot flows smoothly; and we follow the pursuit of the murderer clue by clue until we finally come to the big, exciting episode on the Williamsburg Bridge. It should be further said in praise of this film that the police are portrayed as hard workers—both mentally and physically, for while Barry uses his brains in assorting all the suspicious characters who turn up during the solving of the murder, several younger fellows do the seemingly endless leg work which also leads to results. "The Naked City" may at times remind you of yellow journalism, but it is also a fascinating portrayal of life in the big city—when its glamor has been stripped away.

"A Double Life" gives us a more flossy view of New Yorkers, mainly because in this film many of the principal characters are actors, and actors as you know are no ordinary lot. This script by Ruth Gordon and Garson Kanin makes them quite an extraordinary group; and one actor in particular, played extremely well by Ronald Colman, is in a class by himself. He's supposedly a great actor, but the other characters add to the confusion by describing him as a good fellow, a heel and a stinker. The plot also reveals him as a psychopathic *and* a murderer. It seems that when this "great actor" plays a rôle he becomes so obsessed with the characterization that he takes on many of its facets. Well, Mr. Colman plays Othello—and the rest is obvious. What holds your interest in this movie, in spite of its expected events, is Michael Kanin's good production and George Cukor's understanding direction. Many of the New York scenes were taken on the spot, and the cast looks and acts like the people they're supposed to be. Signe Hasso, as Colman's divorced wife who plays Desdemona in his show, Edmond O'Brien as the press agent who supplies the jealousy motive in real life, Shelley Winters as the blond babe Colman picks up and confuses with Desdemona when he goes berserk, Millard Mitchell as a reporter, and several others give performances which contribute to reality. "A Double Life" could have been a better film if its writers had made clear that Colman was portraying a sick man and not just an actor; we'd hate to think that most actors go through this torture when their plays are a great success. In any case, "A Double Life" is an intelligent movie and offers an absorbing picture of theatrical life, even though its main

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concern is in a case history of an emotionally ill man.

"My Girl Tisa" goes back to New York of 1905, and gets so sentimental about the immigrants who lived here then that it fails to look at them or the city realistically. Lilli Palmer is very attractive as the young foreigner who works in a sweatshop to earn enough money to bring over her father; and Sam Wanamaker is quite likable as the would-be lawyer with his eyes on politics. No doubt Producer Milton Sperling meant to give us a slice of Americana, but what he has turned out is a theatrical piece of horn-tooting about the big-hearted people who came here at the turn of the century and eventually became Americans, hurrah, hurrah. Director Elliott Nugent includes some pleasant touches of humor when he isn't allowing his lead characters or the members of the large supporting cast to mount a soap box and shoot off at the mouth. PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Books

The Circus in the Attic. Robert Penn Warren. Harcourt. $3.00

THIS collection of fourteen short stories, of which two are really *novellas,* "brings together for the first time Mr. Warren's best shorter fiction over the past seventeen years," the dust-cover states. Since no story except the first is dated, a good time can be had by any reader setting them in order of writing. My own guess is that "Prime Leap," the last story in the book, was written the earliest; it is rambling, unconsequential, and leans on atmosphere and Southern dialect in a way few of the other stories find it necessary to do.

The first story is the most worked upon, and has been written since Mr. Warren's "All the King's Men," the Pulitzer Prize for fiction of last year. But good though it is—and one instinctively thinks of comparing it with this one of Faulkner's, that one of Steinbeck's, even, perhaps, this Katherine Mansfield, that de Maupassant; that is, one judges it at the highest level, on its own terms, and by its own request—yet, even here, there are unintegrated effects. For example, the story of the "monimint" to Cash Perkins and Seth Sykes, killed in the winter of 1861-2, is perhaps the most moving and brilliantly told incident, not only in this story, but in the whole book. But it is hardly over when another story is told, that of Lem Lovehart, great-grandfather of the whittler of the circus in the attic. Lem, in 1778, arrived in the part of the country where he was later to settle, shot two squirrels, found a spring, ate his dinner, and then, "for no reason at all, his leathery heart suddenly softened and swelled in his breast, and he wept." The next paragraph is also devoted to tears, and then one more to the whole rest of Lem's life: he married a fifteen year old, had three children, built a cabin, and was scalped by a Chickasaw. Now, if his brief moment of surrender to sentiment had any significance, and if Mr. Warren's brief entering of his mind to note it had any relevance, either to Lem's development, or to the story, there would be no objection to it. But this darting in and out as though the author were a kingfisher or a seagull, at home equally in the air of objective, and the water of subjective writing, isn't satisfactory, and this popping in and out of his characters to see what is making them tick is inartistic and unconvincing. Mr. Warren does it again with his inadequate description of Mrs. Lovehart's incestuous feelings for her son. She "would fling herself on her knees and suddenly seize him, driving her fingers into his thin back, and crush him to her bosom and crouch thus for minutes." In fact, Mr. Warren still likes to splash his paints about, and to bid his reader see how like a whale, when they are not quite the sponges he thinks them. To describe, even to explain, even to tell, is not enough: every incident, sad experience, must be created, realized, integrated.

"Blackberry Winter" is perhaps the most successful of these stories: the child's relations with both his parents, and his fear of the tramp, are very well done. "Christmas Gift," "A Christian Education," and "The Love of Elsie Barton" also are of a piece, complete. But others, notably "The Life of Professor Millen," are insufficiently worked out. ANNE FREMANTLE.

The Hunters and The Hunted. Sacheverell Sitwell. Macmillan. $4.00.

THE YOUNGEST Sitwell publishes one of his exotic, unclassifiable volumes of prose every two or three years, but nobody seems to take very much notice. Edith's poems and Osbert's autobiographies sell well, or at least attract attention, but Sacheverell's books—halfway between poem and autobiography— have perhaps too great a share of the inherited Sitwell eccenticity to be popular. All of them that I have read follow the same pattern: a series of essays on works of art or incidents from life that have moved him by their beauty or their horror is given continuity by the tenuous thread of a recurrent mood.

I would recommend the Sitwellian novice to begin with an earlier book by Sacheverell, "Splendours and Miseries," in which the predominant mood is one of horror and disgust. Mr. Sitwell there assembles images of terror drawn from his vast knowledge of the arts and history, and sets them down side by side with similar real-life images that haunt his memories of the London blitz. Interspersed are idyllic interludes on the organ music of Bach, on some freakishly beautiful varieties of garden flower now extinct, on Benozzo Gozzoli's painting "The Grape Harvest."

In "The Hunters and the Hunted" Mr. Sitwell tries to sustain this idyllic, nostalgic mood throughout, but somehow fails, wordily, to do so. His piece on Mozart

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is nothing beside his Bach; his description of the countless varieties of beautiful birds is boring, as the flower piece was not; various other passages also challenge comparison with the earlier book and fall short of its excellence. Yet certain numerous pages in this new book, Christ's face in a Byzantine mosaic, descriptions of medieval French hunting customs and costumes, descriptions of some of the illustrations in the Duc de Berri's "Book of Hours,"—which *Life* reproduced recently—would stand out in any ordinary collection of essays.

Mr. Sitwell has simply set himself too high a standard in earlier books—"The Dance of the Quick and the Dead" is the one I have read besides "Splendours and Miseries," but there are others. In a way, I wish he were content to write a mere book of disconnected essays, instead of trying to make the reader see connections where none exist except in the unconscious or subconscious mind of Mr. Sitwell. But one must be grateful for beauty wherever one finds it these days, and perhaps Mr. Stilwell could not write his rich, suggestive books in any other way. His work is a survival from the esthetic eclecticism of the 1890's, but his sense of beauty, with its preference for the terrifying, the grotesque, or even the merely quaint, is essentially modern. If you can stomach *belles lettres* at all, Mr. Sitwell is your dish—one of those meats like pheasant that taste all the better for age and decay.

VIVIAN MERCIER

East of Fifth: The Story of an Apartment House. Alan Dunn. S. & S. $2.75.

EVERYBODY who lives in an apartment house, in New York, or wants to know what it is like to live in one, will buy this book, so the important thing is to tell how to read it. You open it in the front and not in the back, because it is in English and not in Arabic; the pages then are numbered, and you proceed from page 1 (which is page 8 because it is preceded by blank pages, the title page, the page with the copyright information, a page with a man sowing, inspired by Millet—the S&S imprint—and a page with a spot, or decoration, by Allen Dunn of a sundial) from page 1 to page 168 (which in turn is followed by a page "About the Author" which explains that Mr. Dunn is the *New Yorker* Mr. Dunn and that Mrs. Dunn is the *New Yorker's* wonderful Mary Petty, which in turn is followed by three blank pages. Except on the blank pages this book has a drawing in black and white by Mr. Dunn on every page, and ninety people out of a hundred are going to open the book anywhere at all, and think that these are funny drawings and look at any page anywhere, and read the caption under the drawing, and then the type at the top of the page—if they do that they are going to miss the point of the book.

"East of Fifth" follows the clock through twenty-four hours of the lives of people in the apartment house and the life of the house itself—the machinery by which it works, the men who work the machinery, the doormen, the resident agent, the elevator men, the maids. The book is like a certain type of moving picture: there are Mr. Dunn's pictures and the captions make the people in the pictures speak; at the same time there is the commentator, the narrator, Mr. Dunn again, who speaks in different type at the top of the page, his sentences proceeding from page to page. So that there are three things going on at once and that is why you have to read the book the way

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a book is generally read by the literate, from start to finish, and not skipping from place to place looking for laughs.

If I have that matter finally straightened out, there remains only to say that Mr. Dunn's text is serene, filled with pity for his characters, and also with irony and understanding. His drawings find the truth and state it sharply, wittily, but with restraint and tenderness. The snobs, the drunks, the simple people, the unhappy people, the bores, the timid, the despairing people who are packed into this tight urban box are people we know and are. That being understood, you can read the book and laugh, the way you could laugh with Chaplin, but only after you had understood. C. G. PAULDING.

On the Iliad. Rachel Bespaloff. Introduction by Hermann Broch. Pantheon. $2.50.

I AM probably not the one to review this book, for I do not like oracular criticism, full of words like the All, the Cosmic, the World-content; and I detest criticism which, like the introduction, consists of constant comparisons involving great names: Goethe, Tolstoy, Beethoven, Nietzsche, Job, Bach, Aeschylus, Kant, Picasso. Rachel Bespaloff has written a series of poetic meditations, in the tradition of Nietzsche, using Homer is her point of departure. Hermann Broch has written another poetic meditation, using Rachel Bespaloff as a point of departure. Such writing may express the soul of the writer, but it does very little to elucidate Homer. Of what use is it to write a sentence like that which closes the essay on Hector? "Against the eternal blindness of history is set the creative lucidity of the poet fashioning for future generations heroes more godlike than the gods and more human than men." The *Iliad* does all right by itself, without such comments. Again, Hermann Broch says that in linking the *Iliad* with Biblical prophecy (in her essays "Poets and Prophets") the author "endows the Homeric work with a new significance for our time —a significance rather Kierkegaardian than existentialist—and it is from here that her interpretation gains a large measure of its essential importance. Were this the only justification of her analysis, this alone would suffice." But as the author herself says in a sentence that seems oddly out of context, "The more intimate our commerce with these two divinely inspired books, the more suspicious we become of symbolic interpretations that charge them with too rich a meaning."

E. P. RICHARDSON.

The Catholic Picture Dictionary. Harold A. Pfeiffer. Illustrations by R. and K. Wood. Duell. $2.00.

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Did you get around to **PRIEST-WORKMAN IN GERMANY** ($2.50) by Henri Perrin, by the way? Father John S. Kennedy's review of it came a few days ago, and we are still purring. Here is as much as there is room for:

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The Inner Forum

The Church in India

OF THE three hundred million people in the new Dominion of India some four million are now Catholics; native priests number 1,344. In Moslem Pakistan there are only 24 native priests and 162,000 Catholics in a population of seventy-five millions. Only a slightly higher proportion obtains among the fourteen millions in the independent Native States.

In Portuguese Goa (where Francis Xavier is buried), Cochin and Mylapore British India Catholic comprise about one-seventh of the four and one-half million populace and there are 768 native priests. In addition to these Catholics of the Roman rite all over India, there are two-thirds of a million adherents of the Syro-Malabar and Malankar rite and over 900 native priests. The first native bishop was consecrated in 1923; twelve of the dioceses of the Roman Rite are now administered by native bishops, while six other dioceses are served by native bishops and clergy of the above non-Roman Rites.

According to official statistics Catholics in India increased by one-third in the decade beginning in 1931 their percentage increase was double that of the general population. To quote the *Medical Missionary* (of Philadelphia, Pa.): "Since the Church does not depend on the purely human phenomenon, the number is not the true measure of her strength." Two years ago Monsignor Kierkels wrote in the *Bombay Examiner*: "More than numbers we note the general onward trend and vitality of the Church [in India]."

Catholic Missions declares: "Even after four hundred years of steady effort . . . the Church has established only a strong beachhead in India." And since the populace is coming more and more under the spell of American inventions and other Western ways, "the modern machine is taking its place beside superstition to impede the work of the missioner." But "the new Constitution for India allows for the free exercise of the Catholic faith and does not endanger the status of their schools." Christianity is no longer a foreign importation.

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